NIKOS BEL-JON
METAL MURALIST

Although born in Greece and strongly influenced by the classicists, Nikos Bel-Jon broke completely with the past to capture the vision of America he first encountered some 15 years ago. Oils, his traditional medium, gave no satisfaction and seemed unequal to the task. He began experimenting with vital new forms and techniques, dramatic innovations which resulted in his unique art form—the metal mural.

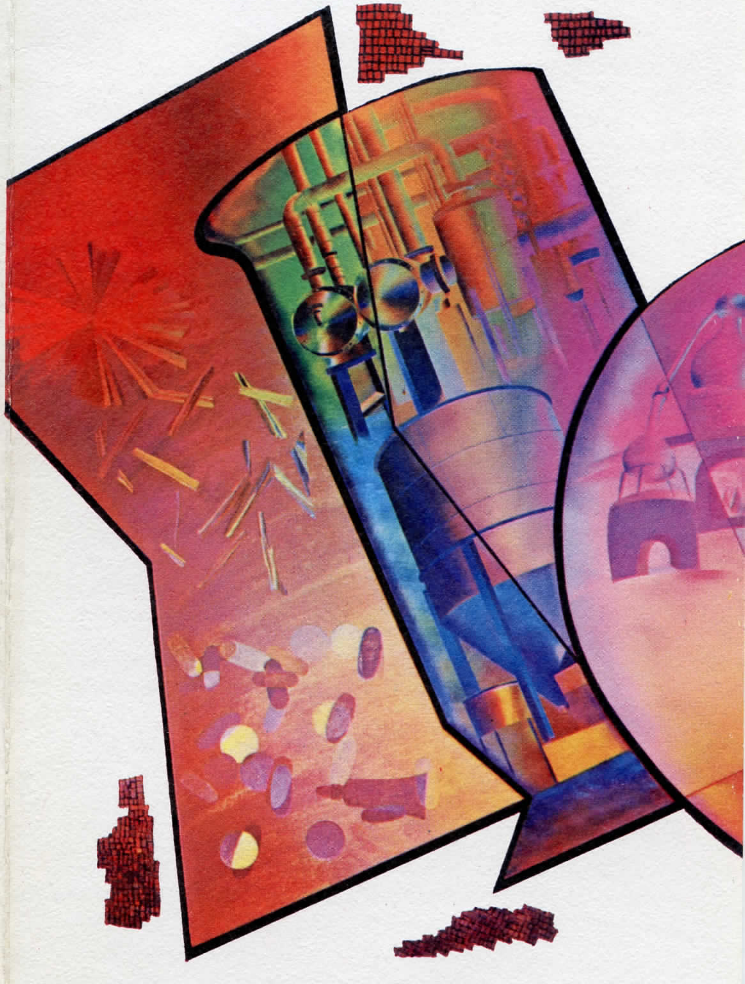
Bel-Jon's art has the intrinsic character of modern architecture—clean, precise, yet capable of a sudden warmth. The colorful movement portrays a fiery world of imagination and creation that is distinctly contemporary.

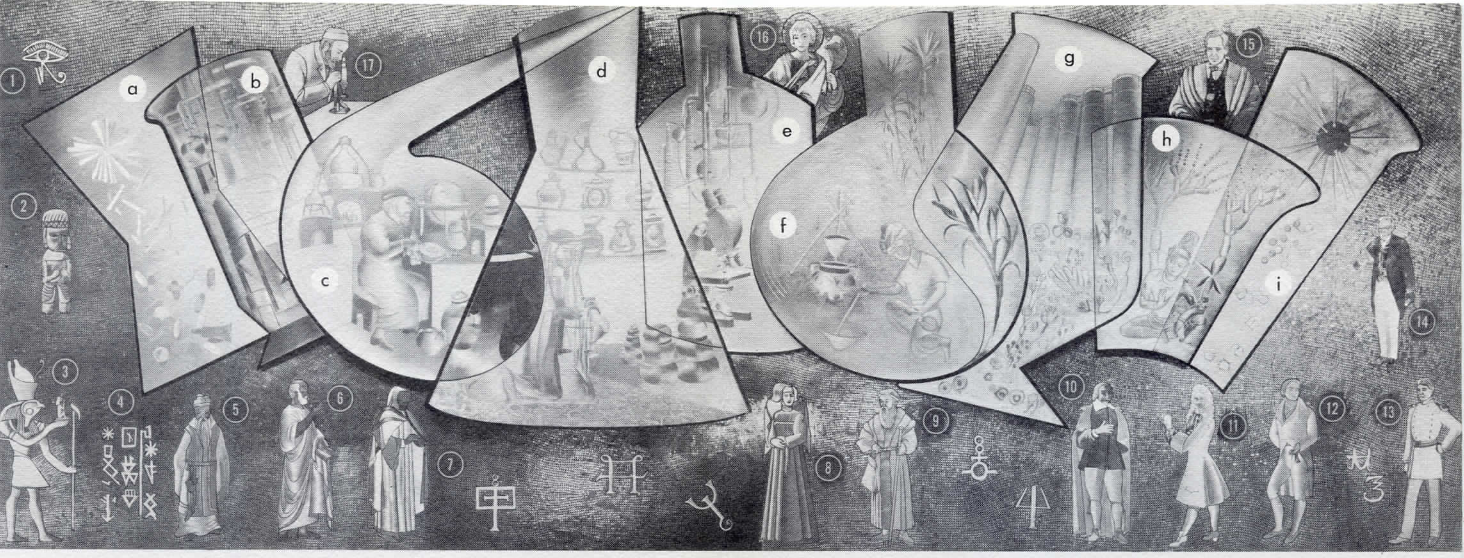
The selection of Bel-Jon to create the Pfizer mural culminated an extensive nation-wide search by Leonard-Colangelo-Peters, architects for the Pfizer space. He had already established a solid reputation on the West Coast with banks, churches, hospitals and such companies as General Motors, Food Machinery and Chemical Corporation, Continental Can and Kaiser Industries. A Bel-Jon portrait of J. Edgar Hoover, done in aluminum, graces the FBI offices in Washington.

Holder of a master of arts degree from the Superior School of Fine Arts, Athens, Bel-Jon also studied at both the Ecole du Louvre and Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris under Greek and French government scholarships. He was Chief of the Fine Arts Section with the Greek Ministry of Education and has exhibited his modern paintings extensively in Europe where many are found in private collections, museums and public buildings.

Bel-Jon is certain that his European background gave him the confidence to strike out in a totally new direction. But he never looks back and won't pick up a brush—this despite the fact that "I painted every day of my life that I can remember before coming to America." Today, his obsession is metals, and what he achieves with them no other artist has yet attempted.

THE PFIZER MURAL





1. EYE OF HORUS—Horus, mythical son of the Egyptian god of good, is said to have lost his eye while avenging the death of his father. His eye, miraculously restored, was used as a hieroglyphic symbol by Mediterranean people to designate effective remedies. Hence, it is thought by some to be the origin of modern medicine's Rx symbol for prescriptions.

2. FETISH FIGURE—Some primitive peoples attribute illness to spirits. Many times, magic fetish figures such as this are used to transfer or dispel evil spirits believed to cause disease.

3. HORUS—In Egyptian mythology, this falcon-headed god was often identified with the sun, whose rays sustained life for the Egyptians and whose omnipotence affected many physical and mental disease cures.

4. SUMERIAN SEAL—Cuneiform characters, similar to those represented in this Sumerian inscription, were used by physicians of the Tigris-Euphrates valley to write man's first recorded prescriptions.

5. EMPEROR SHEN-NUNG — (circa 2700 B.C.) Discovered a large number of drugs and poisons. This knowledge, set forth in Pen Tsao (the Chinese *Materia Medica*) which contains descriptions of thousands of drugs, is still used in China.

6. HIPPOCRATES—(circa 400 B.C.) "The Father of Medicine." Greek-born, Hippocrates changed the course of medical history in the western world by his practices of studying case histories, observing "the whole patient" and "aiding Nature to heal."

7. DOCTOR of SALERNO—(circa 800 A.D.) Salerno is famed as the seat of the first organized medical school in Europe. As a meeting place for physicians of every race and creed, it contributed greatly to the wide dissemination of the best of medieval medicine.

8. SISTER of ST. MARTHA—Representative of one of the first orders of "devoted women of God" who, like the "Poor Clares" and the Sisters of St. John, chose to devote their lives to nursing the sick.

9. VESALIUS—(circa 1514-1564) Vesalius, through his dissections and demonstrations, refuted accepted anatomical doctrines and provided the fundamental data for the resurgence of medical thought that characterized the Renaissance.

10. DR. WILLIAM HARVEY—(1578-1657) Harvey's elucidation of the circulatory system is considered one of the great achievements of medicine. Like Vesalius, this English physician broke with tradition and helped establish the principles of observation as fundamental to medical science.

11. ANTON VAN LEEUWENHOEK—(1633-1723) Inventor of the microscope, this Dutch lensmaker's observations of living forms of matter so small that millions of them could fit on the head of a pin, opened new horizons of medicine that eventually helped establish germs as a cause of infectious disease.

12. DR. EDWARD JENNER—(1749-1823) Jenner's courage to experiment with cowpox vaccination for the control of smallpox established him as one of the greatest benefactors to mankind. His contribution became a monumental development in the science of preventive medicine.

13. DR. WALTER REED—(1851-1915) A bacteriologist in the United States Army Medical Corps, he brought about the control of yellow fever by the discovery that the disease was carried by mosquitoes.

14. DR. PAUL EHRLICH—(1854-1915) "The Father of Chemotherapy." His discovery of Salvarsan, a synthetic medicinal chemical used to control syphilis, was the first totally man-made drug to be accepted by the medical profession. The successful use of a synthetic drug ushered in a new era of medical therapy.

15. SIR ALEXANDER FLEMING—(1881-1955) English bacteriologist who discovered penicillin. His observations on penicillin were published in the *Journal of Experimental Pathology* in 1929. Fleming was knighted in 1944 and awarded the Nobel Prize in 1945.

16. ST. LUKE—One of the Patron Saints of physicians and author of one of the New Testament gospels, St. Luke mitigates the suffering of the dying and is usually represented with the Lamb of God carried over his shoulders.

17. LOUIS PASTEUR—(1822-1895) This immortal French chemist probably influenced medicine more than any man since Hippocrates. Through his work with microorganisms, he laid the foundation for controlled fermentation synthesis of industrial and medicinal chemicals and established beyond doubt the germ etiology of infectious disease.

ALCHEMICAL SYMBOLS — During the Middle Ages, much experimentation was directed toward the discovery of the Philosopher's Stone that would transmute base metals into gold, or the *Mithradaticum,* a universal antidote for all poisons. Alchemists often served as physicians who compounded their own drugs, and both medicine and pharmacy were pervaded by mystery, magic and symbolism. Prescriptions written by the physician-alchemist contained many signs that reflected their astrological origins. Some of these symbols are incorporated in the mural to emphasize the common origins of medicine and pharmacy. Included in the frieze directly below the main elements of the mural, from left to right, are the symbols the alchemists used to signify "universal spirit," "to mix," "to pulverize," "essential oil," "precipitate," "pound" and "ounce." The last sign is still used in prescriptions today.

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Since 1849 *Products for medicine, industry and agriculture*

MAJOR components of the mural are nine laboratory flasks and beakers rendered in stylized form in which the following elements are seen as interpreted by Bel-Jon: **a.** Greatly magnified crystals of pharmaceutical compounds. Various drug dosage forms are represented in the lower segment. **b.** Heavy equipment used in chemical production. **c.** PARACELSUS (circa 1493-1541) — The sixteenth century's most formidable physician, Paracelsus contributed much to pharmacy, pharmacology and therapeutics. Although an extremely controversial medical figure, his introduction of various inorganic chemicals and new drugs into medicine left a deep imprint upon his times. **d.** RHAZES (circa 865-925) — One of the great Persian physicians who contributed to the emergence of medicine as a science. Among his better known contributions was the diagnostic differentiation of measles from smallpox. The introduction of animal tissue ligatures in surgery is attributed to Rhazes. **e.** A basic tool of scientific research—the microscope. Also represented are chemical distillation apparatus and laboratory equipment. **f.** MIDDLE EASTERN PHYSICIAN—Representative of the golden age of Arabian medicine during the time of Avicenna (circa 1,000). One of the developments of this flourishing pre-Renaissance period was the distillation of alcohol from fermented wheat, corn and other grains, as shown here. **g.** A jungle of molds, yeasts, bacteria and other microorganisms. Some of these microbes cause disease and destroy crops. Others are made to yield antibiotics and other compounds beneficial to mankind. The towering tanks symbolize large-scale chemical processing equipment. **h.** A HINDU DEITY—This ancient deity is depicted with a native Indian plant from which modern scientists extracted one of the first "drugs for the mind." The greatly magnified mold filaments behind the figure represent the transition from ancient, unpurified botanical remedies to modern, fermentation-produced medicinal chemicals. **i.** At the top of the beaker is the fossil form of a microscopic animal, below which are a molecular model of an organic compound and simple chemical structures which constitute the chemical cornerstones of many important drugs.